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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 001049

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BAGHDAD FOR RIES AND TUELLER

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [OVIP](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [SW](#)
SUBJECT: BILDT AND IRAQ

REF: A. STOCKHOLM 1038 AND PREVIOUS
[1](#)B. PARIS 3534

Classified By: Ambassador Wood, reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (s) Foreign Minister Bildt plans to visit Iraq September 1-2. Bildt is scheduled to meet with PM Maliki, President Talabani, Vice-President Hashemi, FM Zebari, and UN Rep Qazi, as well as Ambassador Crocker. As a preface to Bildt's August 28 DVC with Embassy Baghdad, we provide background and suggested goals. We suggest raising with him greater EU diplomatic support and economic assistance, to include Swedish technical personnel support. End Summary.

Background on Bildt and Iraq

[1](#)2. (u) Bildt is on record as supporting the necessity of regime change in Iraq, including in a January 28, 2003, signed article in the International Herald Tribune. As recently as July 15, 2007, he said in a leading Swedish daily paper, Svenska Dagbladet, "when all is said and done I believe that things would have been worse in Iraq today had Saddam still been in power." Bildt wrote in his blog August 24, 2007, that he had been discussing with French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner (following Kouchner's visit to Iraq, ref B) "the significance of an increased role for the UN in the country and the region." Bildt also said in his blog that the EU cannot ignore Iraq and the surrounding area.

[1](#)3. (s) Bildt's remarks in favor of intervention in Iraq and his pre-Iraq war association with Bruce Jackson's pro-intervention Committee for the Liberation of Iraq (CLI) have been highly controversial here. When the CLI connection was made public, former Prime Minister Goran Persson criticized Bildt. Domestically, Bildt is pushing the envelope by traveling to Iraq. We expect that he will call for greater UN and EU roles. He and Minister Billstrom will also address the issue of Iraqi immigration to Sweden. Sweden receives over half of all Iraqis who end up in EU countries, taking in over 7,000 in 2006, and on track for over 20,000 in 2007. With a total estimated population of 70,000-120,000 Iraqis resident in Sweden, Sweden's role in the future of Iraq is also a domestic issue. Sweden now provides assistance to NGOs working in Kurdish areas and to democratization programs elsewhere in Iraq.

Bildt's Delegation and Itinerary

[1](#)4. (s) Bildt will be accompanied for the August 28 DVC by MFA Political Director Bjorn Lyrvall and by MFA Director for the Middle East and North Africa Peter Tejler (who will not travel to Iraq).

15. (s) For the visit to Baghdad, Bildt will be joined by Immigration Minister Tobias Billstrom, Lyrvall, Bildt's assistant Diana Janse, Sweden's Ambassador to Iraq (resident in Jordan) Niclas Trouve, plus one additional staffer and three security officers (total of nine persons). Knowledge of the visit to Iraq is very closely held in the GOS. The Swedes have furnished the following itinerary (as of August 27):

DRAFT PROGRAM

For H.E. Mr. Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the accompanied delegation.

Saturday 1 September

12:40 TBC Arrival at Marka Airport (?) (alt. Queen Alia Airport)
12:40-13:30 Transport to Queen Alia International Airport, check in
14:00 Departure by RJ 814
16:30 Arrival at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) by RJ 814
17:00-17:30 Transport from BIAP to International Zone (IZ)
17:30-18:30 Meeting with H.E. Mr. Nouri al-Maliki, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq
18:30-19:00 Transport to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
19:00-20:00 Meeting with H.E. Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq
20:00-21:30 Dinner hosted by H.E. Mr. Hoshyar Zebari
21:30 Departure for IZ
Accommodation at Control Risks-Group (CRG) Compound

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Sunday 2 September

08:00-09:00 Breakfast. Host: H.E. Mr. Ryan Crocker, Ambassador of the U.S.
U.S. Embassy Mr. Matthew Tueller, Political Counselor,
Affairs H.E. Mr. Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign
Sweden to Iraq H.E. Mr. Niclas Trouv, Ambassador of
(confirmed -- arranged by the Embassy of Sweden in Amman)
09:00-09:30 Transport to the Presidential Palace
09:30-10:15 Meeting with H.E. Mr. Jalal Talabani, President of the Republic of Iraq
10:15-10:30 Transport to meeting (Venue TBD)
10:30-11:30 Meeting H.E. Tariq al-Hashemi, Vice-President of the Republic of Iraq
11:30-12:00 Transport to IZ
12:00-13:30 Lunch. Host: Mr. Ashraf Qazi, UNSRSG (confirmed -- venue TBD -- arranged by the Embassy of Sweden in Amman)
13:30-14:00 Transport to venue TBD
14:00-14:45 Press conference with H.E. Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq
Special request: Meeting with the press in connection with the departure, not earlier for security reasons, venue TBD.
15:00-17:30 Transport to BIAP and check in
Departure by RJ 815 to Amman

Follow-up to a Bildt Visit

16. (s) Bildt's visit to Iraq is significant for Sweden and has potential to influence the EU's role in Iraq. We do not know if there was a planned connection between Bildt and Kouchner's visits, but their sequencing creates a dynamic that can be beneficial, particularly in the run-up to the UNGA in late September. We suggest the Secretary invite a group of interested EU foreign ministers to meet on Iraq on the margins of the UNGA. In the longer perspective, Sweden

has already begun planning for the EU presidency in the second half of 2009. We should urge Bildt now to push for greater EU involvement in Iraq, both in terms of assistance and diplomatic support. This should include Swedish experts in EU assistance programs and the opening of an EU diplomatic mission in Iraq.

Bio

[17](#). (c) Bildt, 58, was Prime Minister of Sweden from 1991-1994. He was prominent in Balkan roles from 1995, first as Co-Chair of the Dayton Peace Conference, later as High Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and subsequently as UNSGY Special Envoy for the Balkans. Bildt blogs daily on policy issues, sometimes to the consternation of the MFA bureaucracy. He has been repeatedly bruited by local pundits and the media as a candidate for the joint EU/EC foreign policy high representative post that would, under the EU's proposed reforms, consolidate the Solana and Ferrero-Waldner roles.

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